

April 15, 1964

The Hon. Douglas Dillon  
Secretary of the Treasury  
Treasury Department  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

We have a suggestion with respect to a disposition of the three million silver dollars which the Treasury Department has on hand. This disposition, we believe, would be above criticism and would benefit another department of the United States Government, the Smithsonian Institution, which holds our national numismatic collection.

We assume that among the silver dollars now on hand at the Treasury are a quantity of numismatically scarce or rare silver dollars.

The Smithsonian Institution has a superb numismatic collection but does not have funds to acquire additional items.

Our thought is to permit Smithsonian Institution to buy the scarce silver dollars from you at face value from time to time so that it may benefit from the premium value of these dollars by exchanging them for items of equal numismatic value which they need. Smithsonian could obtain, by gift, by loan, or from the sale of some of the dollars sufficient money to pay the face value of the silver dollars which the Treasury Department turns over to them. If the Treasury Department wishes to hold its fund in silver dollars, then common silver dollars could be turned over by Smithsonian in payment. The Smithsonian could then dispose of the coins acquired from the Treasury Department slowly, in limited amounts, and at fair values, whereas, if the Treasury Department sold these coins at auction the values would probably be less, and speculative commercialism, including attempts to corner the market, would be avoided. The private collector could then have an equal opportunity.

The U. S. Mint started the government's numismatic collection and in 1838 Congress began to appropriate small sums to permit additions to be made to the collection principally out of foreign and U. S. coins deposited at the Mint for re-coining. The tradition of permitting the government's collection

Page 2

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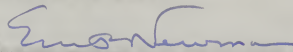
to benefit from rare coins on hand therefore has an established background. Today that department has no means of acquisition other than by gift and sincerely needs it. The opportunity is here to do it without cost and in a way which avoids adverse criticism.

Naturally, there may be many modifications and improvements in the foregoing plan but if the fundamental of helping the Smithsonian numismatic collection at no cost or embarrassment to the Treasury is kept in mind the plan seems workable.

Would you give this your consideration. The writer will be glad to discuss this matter with you or any other official if you believe that would be helpful to our national interest.

Very truly yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

By 

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Eric P. Newman, President

EPN/atb



TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
FISCAL SERVICE  
WASHINGTON 25

APR 28 1964

Mr. Eric P. Newman  
President  
Numismatic Education Society  
6450 Cecil Avenue  
St. Louis 5, Missouri

Dear Mr. Newman:

I have your letter of April 15, 1964, addressed to Secretary Dillon, in which you suggest that the Treasury make available to the Smithsonian Institution the silver dollars we have remaining which have special numismatic value.

Your plan contemplates that the Smithsonian Institution could realize from the numismatic value of these dollars funds with which to acquire other items of interest to the Institution.

We have received a number of suggestions for the disposal of the remaining dollars, but this is new and original. I do not know at this time how the dollars will finally be disposed of, but we thank you for your suggestion, which is most interesting.

Very truly yours,

  
Fiscal Assistant Secretary

May 5, 1965

Treasury Department  
Fiscal Service  
Washington 25, D.C.

Attention: Mr. John K. Carlock

Gentlemen:

Thank you for your letter of April 28, 1964 in response to our letter of April 15, 1964 suggesting that the silver dollars of numismatic interest in the Treasury Department be made available to the Smithsonian Institution.

As you no doubt realize, a portion of these silver dollars could be turned over to Smithsonian in the event another disposition is planned for the balance. Smithsonian Institution certainly deserves this opportunity as an arm of the Federal Government.

If there is anything further we can do to forward this proposal, please let us know.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC  
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb

cc  
Mr. V. Clain-Stefanelli  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, D. C.